

perhaps put another gauge over here—because we are going to keep doing this every week the Senate is in session.

Today, as I said, we are looking at No. 20. I looked at two agencies that exist in the Federal Government: the National Endowment for the Humanities, NEH, and the National Endowment for the Arts, NEA. These two agencies are engaged in cultural projects. Some of these are—people would deem—somewhat essential, but we have looked at two agencies that we think ought to be identified today.

The public probably will remember the 87th Academy Awards—better known as the Oscars—that took place in Hollywood a few months ago. Many Americans tune in and watch this high-profile event featuring America's rich and famous. As always, a parade of actors pull up in their stretch limousines and step into the bright lights of the entertainment industry's media—the flashing lights, the march down the red carpet, and stop to have their pictures taken. There, in tailored tuxes and designer gowns—some of which cost, amazingly, over \$100,000—everybody is trying to outdo everybody else.

The bottom line is Hollywood is not short of money. As Americans watch this, they see the Oscars that are being offered. Then we look at that and say: What in the world is a \$25,000 check from the Federal Government to Hollywood doing in this process?

It is hard to understand the concept that Hollywood needs support, needs a handout from the Federal Government, but they are developing an Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Hollywood. Somehow they have applied for a \$25,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Now, that is not a major amount compared to our budget problems here and the money we deal with, but the American public ought to be saying: Why in the world are we giving a penny to Hollywood to support the building of a museum?

It is simply because the process is open for anybody to submit for a grant. But who is reviewing these things? Who is looking at this? Does Hollywood truly need taxpayer money to construct a museum of motion pictures through the National Endowment for the Arts?

We also discovered that the National Endowment for the Humanities got engaged in one of these efforts, spending considerably more—\$914,000—to support a conference entitled “What is Love? Romance Fiction in the Digital Age.” The conference was full of speakers networking with each other and even giving the opportunity for adults to design and color their own title page.

Again, I am asking why. Why, given our \$18.5 trillion debt growing every day, do we have to give away a nearly \$1 million grant to support a conference on how in the digital age to develop romantic books?

While it might be fun to go deeper into this and examine just exactly

what goes on at this conference, that is not really why I am speaking on the floor today. I am simply here to ask why. Is this necessary? Is this the kind of thing we need to be supporting and doing with hard-earned taxpayer dollars that are sent to Washington, not for these purposes?

So today, the cumulative runs close to \$1 million—\$939,000—of taxpayer savings that would go onto our gauge, and we add yet another increment to the gauge in determining how tax dollars are spent.

We are going to continue doing this. This is a small one today. You can see we had some major chunks and major dysfunctions in the Federal Government, but I think it is important for every Senator to be able to go home, talk to their people, and say: We are making every possible effort we can to be efficient and effective with the money you sent to Washington, and we are looking into every dollar to make sure it is spent on essential functions of the Federal Government.

It is astounding how much is being sent, used, and wasted, how much fraud and waste takes place. We will continue to identify that each week.

That is our waste of the week. We will be back each week after our August recess when the Senate is in session to continue to identify ways in which we can save the taxpayers' money.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

FOR-PROFIT SCHOOLS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor many times to talk about for-profit colleges and universities. This is a problem and a challenge we face. What you need to know are three numbers to understand the for-profit college and university industry in America.

By way of preface, this is the most heavily subsidized private business in the United States of America. What are we talking about? The largest, the University of Phoenix; Kaplan University; DeVry University; Rasmussen; Corinthian—you have heard all the names because they advertise constantly, and the money they use to advertise comes from Federal taxpayers.

There are three numbers—and if I were a college professor or law school professor, I would say this is going to

be on the final—on for-profit colleges and universities. Ten percent of high school graduates attend for-profit colleges and universities—10 percent. Twenty percent of all the Federal aid to education goes to for-profit colleges and universities. Why so much? They charge so much. Their tuition is so high. Ten percent of the students; 20 percent of the Federal aid to education; 44 percent of all the student loan defaults in America are at for-profit colleges and universities. Ten percent of the students, 44 percent of the defaults. Why? They charge so much that the students can't finish their education or they end up with a worthless diploma. That is the reality.

There is a second reality. This industry is in serious economic trouble. Last week we had news of another Federal investigation of a for-profit college. In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the University of Phoenix—the largest for-profit college and university—revealed it is under investigation by the Federal Trade Commission for unfair and deceptive practices.

This news comes just weeks after the Center for Investigative Reporting published a story about the University of Phoenix's thinly veiled, dubious marketing and recruiting efforts on military bases—exploitation of our men and women in uniform. Over the past several years, the University of Phoenix has spent millions of dollars to sponsor events, including dances, parties, and concerts, on military bases. Is it because they love our men and women in uniform? No. It is because they want to sign them up. To the University of Phoenix, these sponsorships were simply advertising and marketing events to enroll more men and women in uniform.

When you serve our country, we show our appreciation by saying there is a GI bill waiting for you at the end of your service—in fact, in some cases, while you are still serving—and for your family, too, so that you will be prepared after you have served our country to have a good life with good education and training and job opportunities.

These for-profit colleges and universities can smell an opportunity to make even more money. The University of Phoenix is after these men and women in uniform. They are after tuition assistance dollars. TA is a program that provides up to \$4,500 a year, so servicemembers can use it toward a postsecondary education. And guess what. The money isn't counted in the Federal 90/10 calculation that caps the amount of money these for-profit schools can receive from the Federal Government. Did you hear that? Ninety percent of their revenue comes from the Federal Government. That is why for-profit colleges and universities are the most heavily subsidized private for-profit businesses in America. To for-profit colleges, the money from servicemembers and veterans is unlimited

money. All they have to do is sign them up. And that is what they are doing with these sponsorships.

After the article was published, I wrote to Secretary Ash Carter—Department of Defense—to ask him to take action. The University of Phoenix reportedly is in clear violation of Executive orders limiting the access of these schools to our men and women in uniform. The Department of Defense has confirmed to me they have opened an inquiry into the matter.

During the Senate's reconsideration of the National Defense Authorization Act, I filed an amendment to require the Department to post information on Federal and State investigations and lawsuits against schools on its online education resources for servicemembers.

As part of the Tuition Assistance Program, the Department of Defense has created what it calls TA DECIDE. This allows servicemembers to find information about specific schools when deciding where to use their tuition assistance benefits. It includes information such as the graduation and default rates. Do you know why? Because once that servicemember has used up that GI bill, it is gone. If they waste it on one of these for-profit colleges and universities that give them little or nothing for their GI bill, they do not get a second chance.

Of course, servicemembers need access to this information. Publicly traded companies such as the University of Phoenix have to disclose the information to the SEC when they are under investigation. Members of the military should know that, as well as the general public. It only makes sense.

My amendment wasn't taken up during the Senate's debate, but last week 12 Senators joined me in writing Secretary Carter. This commonsense step to ensure better information for servicemembers about their education options is one the Department of Defense needs to make.

I also want to say a word about another for-profit college that is notorious for its exploitation of students—Ashford University. Ashford University first came to my attention when former Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa had an investigation. He took a look at this so-called university in his home State of Iowa. Do you know what he found? He found they had purchased a small Catholic girls college, purchased their accreditation, and then reopened it under the name “Ashford University.” Do you know how many faculty members there were at Ashford? One faculty member for every 500 students. It wasn't a real university; it was an online scam. They announced last week they are closing down their campus in Iowa. What a heartbreak that must be for the people of Iowa—to lose such a stalwart higher education citizen. That is the reality.

I have run into students in Illinois who said they had just graduated from college.

I said: Where did you go?

They said: Ashford.

And I thought, oh my goodness. What a disappointment. You have wasted your time and your money, you are deep in debt, and that diploma, sadly, is worth very little.

The tide is turning against the for-profit colleges and universities. The question is whether this Senate, this Congress, this government will step up once and for all and defend those young men and women who are wasting their time and money and taxpayer dollars—and in many cases GI bill benefits—on these worthless for-profit schools.

It is time for us to wake up to this reality. I am glad to see this industry is finally facing its day of reckoning.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

SCHEDULES THAT WORK ACT

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today to talk about something that has been bothering me. Who is this Senate supposed to be working for? For years now, this economy has been great for those at the top, but for everyone else, it is getting harder and harder to make it from paycheck to paycheck, harder and harder to build any real security. The world is changing, and Congress can make decisions that help working people stay in the game and help level the playing field or we can just turn our backs.

What have the Republicans done over the past 6 months to try to make families a little more secure, to give people a fighting chance? What have they done? They have turned their backs. In the past 6 months, they have burned huge amounts of time as they tried to shut down Homeland Security, tried to build a pipeline to help a Canadian oil company, tried to turn a human trafficking bill into a referendum on abortion, and now tried to defund Planned Parenthood—all this instead of working on the kinds of issues that would help level the playing field for hard-working people.

You know, there is a lot we could do. For example, Democrats have been fighting to raise the minimum wage. And I strongly agree that no one—no one—should work full time and still live in poverty. I think a \$7.25-an-hour minimum wage is disgraceful. I support the Federal bill to raise the minimum wage to \$12 by 2020, and I applaud the fight for \$15 that is springing up across this country.

When I am asked about whether we should raise the minimum wage, I have three answers: Yes. Yes. Yes. But raising the minimum wage is only the beginning. Half of low-wage workers have little or no say over when they work, and an estimated 20 to 30 percent are in jobs where they can be called in to work at the last minute.

I want us to think about what this means for someone who is busting her fanny trying to build some economic

security. Imagine trying to plan for anything—for childcare, for going back to school, for getting a second job—without knowing when you will be working next week. Imagine trying to plan a monthly budget when your work hours and paycheck can fluctuate 70 percent in a single month. Imagine trying to schedule a doctor's visit or parent-teacher conference if you could get fired just for asking for a few hours off. This is the real world of millions of workers who struggle to make ends meet.

This is something we can fix. A few weeks ago, I introduced the Schedules That Work Act, with 17 Democrats in the Senate and more than 60 Democrats in the House of Representatives. The bill is just common sense and basic fairness: A single mom should know if her hours are being canceled before she arranges for daycare and drives halfway across town to show up at work, a young man trying to put himself through school should be able to request a more predictable schedule without getting fired just for asking, and a worker who is told to wait around on call for hours with no guarantee of work should get something for her time.

The Schedules That Work Act does two simple things: First, it gives all workers the right to request a change in their schedule without getting fired just for asking, and, second, it gives workers who face the worst scheduling practices—workers in retail, food service, and cleaning workers—2 weeks' notice of their work schedules and some additional pay if they are required to wait on call but don't get any work.

Now, look, this bill recognizes that there are emergencies, and when employers have unexpected needs they can reschedule their workers, but we are asking for a little basic fairness so that in ordinary times—day-by-day, week-by-week—workers will have a stable schedule and a chance to build some real economic security.

Democrats want to get to work on changes in the law that would give working people a fighting chance. We want Republicans to let us take up these proposals and let us vote on them. Instead, Republicans are pushing a different agenda, focusing on defunding women's health care and protecting those at the top.

People say Washington doesn't work, but that is wrong. Washington works great—for the right people. When the corporate lobbyists want a carve-out or giveaway, when a giant oil company wants the Keystone Pipeline or when Citibank wants to blast a hole in Dodd-Frank, Republicans fall all over themselves to make it happen. When the rightwing wants to cut off access to health care, Republicans are ready to go, but when it comes to the things that will help families, they turn their backs. This has to stop. We are not here to work for the lobbyists. We are not here to make life easier for big oil companies or for big banks. We are